IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A flame-retardant material, comprising ~~a polymer material having a flame retardant dispersed therein or immobilized on the surface thereof,~~

~~wherein the flame retardant contains~~:

(a) a metal-free group expressed as N_xO_y (where, x and y are positive integers) comprising a compound selected from the group consisting of non-metallic nitric acid compound, non-metallic nitrous acid compound and non-metallic hyponitrous acid compound; and

(b) a group capable of generating water upon heating.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Previously Presented) The flame-retardant material according to Claim 1, wherein the group capable of generating water upon heating comprises a hydroxyl-group-containing compound.

8. (Original) The flame-retardant material according to Claim 7, wherein the hydroxyl-group-containing compound is a metal hydroxide.

9. (Previously Presented) The flame-retardant material according to Claim 8, wherein the metal hydroxide comprises a compound selected from the group consisting of aluminum

hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide and calcium hydroxide.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Withdrawn) A flame-retardant polymer material having a matrix comprising a polymer material having dispersed therein a flame-retardant material which contains a group expressed as N_xO_y (where, x and y are natural numbers) and a group capable of generating water upon heating.

16. (Withdrawn) A flame-retardant polymer material having a matrix comprising a polymer material having immobilized on the surface thereof a flame-retardant material which contains a group expressed as N_xO_y (where, x and y are natural numbers) and a group capable of generating water upon heating.

17. (Withdrawn) A flame-retardant polymer material having a matrix comprising a polymer material having dispersed therein a flame-retardant material which contains a compound selected from the group consisting of nitric acid compound, nitrous acid compound and hyponitrous acid compound, together with a hydroxyl-group-containing compound.

18. (Withdrawn) A flame-retardant polymer material having a matrix comprising a polymer material having immobilized on the surface thereof a flame-retardant material which contains a compound selected from the group consisting of nitric acid compound, nitrous acid

compound and hyponitrous acid compound, together with a hydroxyl-group-containing compound.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Withdrawn) A flame-retardant polymer material mainly comprising a polymer component, wherein such flame-retardant polymer material shows in a spectrum of TDS analysis (thermal decomposition spectroscopy) *in vacuo* a peak attributable to a combustion-related gas component generated within a combustion temperature range of the polymer component, and a peak attributable to a combustion-inhibitory gas component containing at least a group expressed by CO_x (x is a natural number) and generated within a temperature range lower than the combustion temperature range of the polymer component.

31. (Withdrawn) A flame-retardant polymer material mainly comprising a polymer component, wherein such flame-retardant polymer material shows a spectrum of TDS analysis (thermal decomposition spectroscopy) *in vacuo* in which

a peak profile attributable to a combustible gas component generated by decomposition reaction of the polymer component; and

a peak profile attributable to a non-combustible gas component generated as a decomposition product of the polymer component within a temperature range lower than that responsible for the start of the generation of such combustible gas component.

32. (Previously Presented) The flame-retardant material according to Claim 1, wherein the group expressed as N_xO_y (where, x and y are positive integers) comprises ammonium nitrate, and the group capable of generating water upon heating comprises aluminum hydroxide.

33. (Previously Presented) The flame-retardant material according to Claim 1, wherein the group expressed as N_xO_y (where, x and y are positive integers) comprises ammonium nitrate, and the group capable of generating water upon heating comprises magnesium hydroxide.

34. (Cancelled)

35. (Cancelled)

36. (Cancelled)

37. (Cancelled)